

Early detection of drug use cases by health- and social-care providers by applying the principles of interview screening and brief intervention approaches to interrupt drug use progression and, when appropriate, linking people to treatment for substance abuse

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Recalling the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, in which Member States recognized that action against the world drug problem was a common and shared responsibility requiring an integrated and balanced approach,²⁸ by which supply control and demand reduction reinforced each other, as enshrined in the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction²⁹ and the measures to enhance international cooperation to counter the world drug problem,³⁰

Taking note of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction, which, inter alia, recognizes that progress to reduce the demand for illicit drugs should be seen in the context of the need for programmes to reduce the demand for substances of abuse,³¹

Understanding that the use of the techniques of interview screening by health- and social-care providers for the early detection of drug use and, if necessary, brief interventions and the linking of patients to related treatment services and referral, when appropriate, constitutes part of a comprehensive, integrated public health approach to interrupting the progression towards risky drug use and dependence,

Acknowledging that employing such techniques may help to span the gap between preventive efforts and treatment for persons with substance use disorders,

Recognizing that early detection and brief intervention techniques offer preventive measures for identifying and interrupting the progression towards dependence and can potentially reduce any stigma associated with substance use disorders,

Recognizing also that health- and social-care systems and national legal frameworks vary from one State to the next and that national contexts must be considered,

Emphasizing that voluntary participation is essential to the success of early detection and brief intervention techniques,

Recognizing that the use of early detection and brief intervention techniques based on standardized, evidence-based questionnaires and protocols that research has demonstrated to be effective and the linking of persons to treatment on a voluntary basis are locally based, systematic approaches to ensuring that those in

²⁸ General Assembly resolution S-20/2, annex, para. 2.

²⁹ General Assembly resolution S-20/3, annex, paras. 4 and 8.

³⁰ General Assembly resolutions S-20/4 A to E.

³¹ General Assembly resolution 54/132, annex, para. 5.

need of the appropriate health- and social-care and other related treatment services receive such services,

Acknowledging that those techniques can be applied in various health- and social-care settings to intervene in cases involving the abuse of a broad range of substances, before patients encounter serious adverse consequences, and can potentially prevent long-term substance use disorders,

Acknowledging also that drug use is a public health issue, and its early detection and brief intervention and, when appropriate, linking people to treatment require a public health approach that must be addressed within health- and social-care settings between providers and patients,

Noting that many States safeguard the confidentiality of communications concerning illegal drug use between health-care providers and patients, and considering that confidentiality overcomes a barrier to addressing the public health problem of drug use and substance use disorders,

Recognizing the work of the World Health Organization in affirming that such techniques help to reduce substance use and related problems,

Aware that the techniques of early detection, brief intervention and, when appropriate, linking people to treatment can contribute to a reduction in health, social and economic consequences for patients,

1. *Notes* the relationship between substance abuse and health, social and economic consequences;
2. *Acknowledges* the value of using the techniques of early detection, brief intervention and, when appropriate, linking people to treatment in mainstreaming substance abuse prevention and intervention into general health- and social-care settings alongside other health-care approaches;
3. *Supports* the use of those techniques as a means of reducing any stigma that may be associated with substance abuse in the field of health;
4. *Encourages* the implementation of those techniques as a set of effective preventive measures to be applied in health- and social-care settings;
5. *Invites* Member States to educate health- and social-care providers, some of whom may lack awareness of such approaches for addressing potential substance abuse problems in their patients;
6. *Encourages* Member States to raise awareness and build capacity by training health- and social-care providers in the use of those techniques as tools for identifying at-risk populations and to urge providers to encourage early intervention in order to significantly reduce substance abuse and possibly prevent dependence;
7. *Urges* Member States to share with each other and with relevant international organizations their research findings and best practices with early detection, brief intervention and, when appropriate, linking people to treatment;
8. *Encourages* Member States to consider, if necessary, adopting legislation to safeguard the voluntary participation of patients and to protect privacy and confidentiality in communications between health- and social-care providers and patients;

9. *Invites* the World Health Organization to promote worldwide the practices of early detection, brief intervention and, when appropriate, linking people to treatment and to work closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the context of the present resolution.